

counts toward the cumulative limit, remains at 300 lb (136 kg)."

Classification

These actions are authorized by the FMP, which governs the harvest of groundfish in the U.S. exclusive economic zone off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. The determination to take these actions is based on the most recent data available. The aggregate data upon which the determinations are based are available for public inspection at the office of the Regional Director (see **ADDRESSES**) during business hours. Because of the need for immediate action to reduce the harvest of shortspine thornyheads, and because the public had an opportunity to comment on the action at the April 1996 Council meeting, NMFS has determined that good cause exists for this document to be published without affording a prior opportunity for public comment or a 30-day delayed effectiveness period. These actions are taken under the authority of 50 CFR 663.23(c)(1)(i)(E), (G), and (L), and are exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: May 2, 1996.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 96-11546 Filed 5-3-96; 4:47 pm]

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50 CFR Part 672

[Docket No. 960129018-6018-01; I.D. 050396C]

Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska; Pacific cod in the Western Regulatory Area

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting retention of Pacific cod in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). NMFS is requiring that catches of Pacific cod in the Western Regulatory Area be treated in the same manner as prohibited species and discarded at sea with a minimum of injury. This action is necessary because the total allowable

catch (TAC) of Pacific cod in this area has been reached.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12 noon, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), May 5, 1996, until 12 midnight A.l.t., December 31, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary Furuness, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The groundfish fishery in the GOA exclusive economic zone is managed by NMFS according to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska (FMP) prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council under authority of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Fishing by U.S. vessels is governed by regulations implementing the FMP at 50 CFR parts 620 and 672.

In accordance with § 672.20(c)(1)(ii)(B), the TAC for Pacific cod in the Western Regulatory Area was established by the Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4304, February 5, 1996) as 18,850 metric tons (mt).

The Director, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined, in accordance with § 672.20(c)(3), that the TAC for Pacific cod in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA has been reached. Therefore, NMFS is requiring that further catches of Pacific cod in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA be treated as prohibited species in accordance with § 672.20(e).

Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR 672.20 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: May 3, 1996.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

50 CFR Part 672

[Docket No. 960129018-6018-01; I.D. 050396B]

Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska; Pacific cod in the Central Regulatory Area

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting retention of Pacific cod in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). NMFS is requiring that catches of Pacific cod in the Central Regulatory Area be treated in the same manner as prohibited species and discarded at sea with a minimum of injury. This action is necessary because the total allowable catch (TAC) of Pacific cod in this area has been reached.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12 noon, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), May 5, 1996, until 12 midnight A.l.t., December 31, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary Furuness, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The groundfish fishery in the GOA exclusive economic zone is managed by NMFS according to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska (FMP) prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council under authority of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Fishing by U.S. vessels is governed by regulations implementing the FMP at 50 CFR parts 620 and 672.

In accordance with § 672.20(c)(1)(ii)(B), the TAC for Pacific cod in the Central Regulatory Area was established by the Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4304, February 5, 1996) as 42,900 metric tons (mt).

The Director, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined, in accordance with § 672.20(c)(3), that the TAC for Pacific cod in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA has been reached. Therefore, NMFS is requiring that further catches of Pacific cod in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA be treated as prohibited species in accordance with § 672.20(e).

Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR 672.20 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: May 3, 1996.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 96-11548 Filed 5-3-96; 4:47 pm]

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